



## The latest on California politics and government

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### [Budget bill tweaked to give Jerry Brown's tax measure leg up](#)

Legislative Democrats are pushing a late-hour amendment to give Gov. **Jerry Brown** a leg up with his November ballot initiative to raise taxes, tweaking the Elections Code to afford Brown's measure a prominent position on the ballot.

In an amendment to a budget trailer bill, Senate Democrats propose language pushing constitutional amendments proposed by voter initiative, such as Brown's, to second on the ballot, right below bond measures. If lawmakers move the water bond scheduled for Nov. 6 to a later ballot -- as many believe they will -- Brown's tax increase measure would be guaranteed top billing

Further down come statutory changes put on by the Legislature, and ballot initiatives that do not propose constitutional amendments, such as a competing tax measure backed by **Molly Munger**. A higher ballot position is traditionally considered advantageous on ballots with lots of measures, and 11 have qualified for Nov. 6.

The amendment offers this justification:

"The Legislature finds and declares that bond measures and constitutional amendments should have priority on the ballot because of the profound and lasting impact these measures can have on our state."

While this seems like a simple, cost-free change, the amendment appropriates \$1,000 from the general fund to the secretary of state to implement the changes. That, of course, makes the measure a budget "trailer" bill able to be approved by a majority vote of the Legislature under Proposition 25. Otherwise, such a move would be considered an urgency measure and need Republican votes to achieve a two-thirds margin.

The Democratic governor is proposing to raise the state sales tax and income taxes on California's highest earners.